

Message Text

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ORIGIN AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 HA-05 EUR-12 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01
SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 IO-13 /090 R

DRAFTED BY AF/E; PGSMITH
APPROVED BY AF: RMMOOSE
-----090173 090625Z /14

P 090234Z FEB 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY LUSAKA PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 034233

E.O. 11652: XGDS - 1

TAGS:PGOV, PDIP, RH, ZA, SHUM, US

SUBJECT: ZAMBIAN AMBASSADOR NGONDA'S FEB. 7 MEETING
WITH ASST. SECRETARY MOOSE -- MALTA AND HUMAN RIGHTS

SUMMARY: AT AMBASSADOR NGONDA'S REQUEST, MR. MOOSE
REVIEWED THE MALTA MEETING, AND TOLD NGONDA THAT WE WOULD
BE ASKING FOR FRONT LINE ASSISTANCE IN URGING THE PF TO
AGREE WITH US ON AT LEAST THE BASIC PRINCIPLES OF A
SETTLEMENT, SO THAT WE COULD CONTINUE MOVING FORWARD.
EVENTS IN SALISBURY LENT A NEW URGENCY TO THIS EFFORT, AND
WE HOPED WE COULD RELY ON ZAMBIAN HELP, BUT THE FRONT LINE
AND THE PF COULD BE ASSURED THAT NEITHER WE NOR THE
BRITISH WERE NOW ENCOURAGING NOR WOULD SUPPORT AN INTERNAL
AGREEMENT, BECAUSE WE DID NOT FEEL SUCH AN AGREEMENT WOULD
LEAD TO A PEACEFUL TRANSITION TO MAJORITY RULE. NGONDA
ALSO OBJECTED MILDLY TO ONE STATEMENT IN THE UNCLASSIFIED
HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT(SEPTEL), WHICH HE DESCRIBED AS BASIC-
ALLY OBJECTIVE AND FAIR. HE OFFERED TO DISCUSS SUCH
QUESTIONS WITH US AT ANY TIME, AND TO PROVIDE ANY INFORMA-
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TION OR CLARIFICATION HE COULD, TO AVOID ANY FUTURE
MISUNDERSTANDINGS.

I. AMBASSADOR NGONDA OPENED BY NOTING THAT HE WAS SURE
THAT AMBASSADOR LOW WAS KEEPING THE GRZ INFORMED OF RECENT
DEVELOPMENTS CONCERNING RHODESIA, BUT THAT HE FELT IT

WOULD BE USEFUL FOR HIM TO BE BRIEFED AS WELL TO GIVE
HIS GOVERNMENT ANOTHER PERSPECTIVE.

2. IN SUMMING UP THE MALTA MEETING, MR. MOOSE SAID THAT IT HAD PROVIDED AN OPPORTUNITY FOR MUCH DETAILED DISCUSSION OF THE POSITIONS OF THE UK/US SIDE AND THE PATRIOTIC FRONT ON KEY ASPECTS OF A RHODESIAN SETTLEMENT. AFTER HEARING THE PF'S VIEWS, PARTICULARLY ON THE TRANSITION ARRANGEMENTS, THE US AND UK HAD AGAIN SAID THAT IN ORDER FOR THEM TO MUSTER DOMESTIC POLITICAL SUPPORT FOR TAKING RESPONSIBILITY FOR A SETTLEMENT AND BRINGING THE NEEDED PRESSURES TO BEAR FOR SMITH'S DEPARTURE THEY NEEDED A SETTLEMENT PLAN THAT WAS DEMONSTRABLY FAIR TO ALL RHODESIAN NATIONALIST ELEMENTS. IN RESPONSE TO THE PF'S CONCERNS, THE US AND UK HAD AMENDED THE WHITE PAPER PROPOSALS TO ENVISION THE CREATION OF A GOVERNING COUNCIL TO SHARE A DEGREE OF POWER WITH THE RESIDENT COMMISSIONER.

3. MR. MOOSE SAID THAT THE TALKS HAD BEEN A FRANK AND EXCELLENT EXCHANGE OF VIEWS. WHILE NO SPECIFIC AGREEMENTS HAD BEEN REACHED, THE PARTIES HAD GOTTEN CLOSE TO AGREEMENT ON SOME BASIC PRINCIPLES. WE ALSO CONSIDERED THE WIDE VARIETY OF SIDE CONVERSATIONS THAT HAD TAKEN PLACE TO BE VERY USEFUL. AT THE END, THE PF HAD SAID THEY WOULD LIKE TO MEET AGAIN SOON, AND WE HAD AGREED IN CONFIDENTIAL

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PRINCIPLE TO DO SO. THE US AND UK WOULD PROBABLY BE COMMUNICATING WITH THE FRONT LINE IN THE NEXT DAY OR TWO, TO SAY THAT WE BELIEVED THAT THE NEXT ROUND OF MEETINGS SHOULD PRODUCE SOME SPECIFIC RESULTS, AT LEAST AN AGREEMENT ON THE BASIC PRINCIPLES OF A SETTLEMENT. WE FELT WE SHOULD HAVE SOME INDICATION THAT THE PF WERE WILLING TO ACCEDE TO SUCH PRINCIPLES. WE WOULD PROBABLY ASK THE FRONT LINE TO INTERCEDE WITH THE PF TO THIS END.

4. MR. MOOSE ADDED THAT WE WERE CONCERNED TO KEEP UP THE MOMENTUM, AND ALSO BY THE IMPACT OF REPORTED PROGRESS IN THE SALISBURY TALKS ON US DOMESTIC SUPPORT FOR OUR POLICY, IN THE ABSENCE OF VISIBLE PROGRESS IN OUR DEALINGS WITH THE PF. WE WERE NOT SAYING THAT THE PF WAS RECALCITRANT, ONLY THAT WE NEEDED TO REACH SOME DEGREE OF AGREEMENT WITH THEM.

5. WHAT WE HOPED TO DO, MR. MOOSE SAID, WAS TO MOBILIZE FRONT LINE AND PF SUPPORT FOR OUR PROPOSALS, AND THEN PUT THEM BEFORE THE PARTIES TO THE SALISBURY TALKS. WE

HAD TOLD THE PF THAT ANY AGREEMENT REACHED COULD NOT FREEZE OUT MUZOREWA AND SITHOLE. WE REALIZED THAT THE PF NEEDED TO BE CONFIDENT IN THE TRANSITION ARRANGEMENTS, BUT THEY CURRENTLY WANT A DEGREE OF POWER DURING THAT PERIOD THAT GOES BEYOND WHAT WE SEE AS EQUITABLE.

6. MR. MOOSE ADDED THAT DESPITE SUCH DIFFERENCES, WE FELT THAT OUR POSITION WAS CLOSER TO THE PF'S THAN BEFORE. HE WANTED TO ASSURE THE AMBASSADOR AND THE ZAMBIAN GOVERNMENT THAT THE US AND UK WERE NOT ABETTING THE SALISBURY TALKS IN ANY WAY. THE PF HAD NOT ASKED AT MALTA THAT THE US AND THE UK CONDEMN THE INTERNAL TALKS, BUT THE US AND UK HAD PREVIOUSLY SAID PUBLICLY THAT THEY DID NOT BELIEVE THOSE TALKS AS CONSTITUTED CONFIDENTIAL

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WOULD ACHIEVE A PEACEFUL TRANSFER OF POWER. HE KNEW THAT THE FRONT LINE HAD SOME MISGIVINGS ABOUT BRITISH MOTIVES, AND SOME THOUGHT THEY WERE SECRETLY SUPPORTING THE SALISBURY TALKS. THERE WAS NO BASIS FOR THIS. BOTH THE US AND THE UK WISHED TO CONTINUE THE PROCESS OF DEVELOPING THEIR OWN PROPOSAL.

7. AMB. NGONDA ASKED, WHAT WOULD THE US AND UK DO IF AN INTERNAL AGREEMENT WERE ANNOUNCED? MR. MOOSE RESPONDED THAT WE HOPED THIS WOULD NOT HAPPEN. WE HAD TOLD MUZOREWA AND SITHOLE IN GENERAL TERMS WHAT WENT ON AT MALTA. WE HAD GIVEN THEM THE TEXT OF THE REVISED UK/US PROPOSALS, TOGETHER WITH A PAPER ON PEACEKEEPING. WE WOULD SEEK A CHANCE TO REITERATE THAT THE SETTLEMENT WE ARE TALKING ABOUT HAS AN IMPORTANT ROLE FOR THE PF, AND THAT ITS TERMS WILL BE FAR MORE FAVORABLE THAN THOSE THAT MIGHT COME OUT OF SALISBURY. IF AN INTERNAL AGREEMENT WERE ANNOUNCED, WE HAVE NO DOUBT THAT WOULD MAKE VERY MAJOR PROBLEMS FOR US.

8. AMB. NGONDA RECALLED THAT HE HAD PREVIOUSLY CALLED ON MR. MOOSE TO EXPLAIN THE ZAMBIAN GOVERNMENT'S POSITION ON THE UK/US PROPOSALS. HE HAD SAID AT THAT TIME THAT ZAMBIA WISHED THE UK AND US WELL, AND DID NOT WISH TO DO ANYTHING TO FRUSTRATE THEIR EFFORTS. HE KNEW THAT THIS WAS STILL THE ZAMBIAN GOVERNMENT'S POSITION. HE HOPED THE UK/US PROPOSALS WILL PRODUCE THE RESULT THAT WE ALL DESIRE. MEANWHILE, ZAMBIA WOULD CONTINUE TO GIVE SUPPORT TO THE FREEDOM FIGHTERS, BUT IT WAS NOT TRYING TO MAKE THINGS DIFFICULT FOR THE UK/US SIDE.

9. MR. MOOSE SAID HE KNEW THAT PRESIDENT KAUNDA AND THE GRZ COULD BE A VERY GREAT HELP IN THIS EFFORT. CONFIDENTIAL

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KAUNDA HAD WANTED TO KNOW WHO WOULD BELL THE CAT.

WE WANTED TO ARRIVE AT A POSITION WHERE WE COULD PUT PRESSURE ON THE SOUTH AFRICANS AND RHODESIANS. WE KNEW

WHAT WE COULD DO, AND WE WOULD DO IT, BUT WE NOW NEEDED TO BE POSITIONED TO PUT THOSE PLANS INTO MOTION, WITH THE PUBLIC AGREEMENT OF THE PF AND THE FRONT LINE TO AT LEAST THE PRINCIPLES OF A SETTLEMENT. FACING WHAT SEEMED TO BE A NEAR - AGREEMENT IN SALISBURY, IT WAS CLEAR THAT THE LONGER WE WAITED, THE HARDER OUR TASK WOULD BE. WE WERE GRATEFUL THAT THE GRZ AT LEAST WISHED US WELL, BUT WE WOULD LIKE A BIT MORE HELP THAN THAT.

10. AMB. NGONDA THEN ADDED THAT HE ALSO WISHED TO MENTION ONE SMALL POINT CONCERNING THE HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT ON ZAMBIA. HE HAD GONE THROUGH THE REPORT CAREFULLY, AND HAD REPORTED TO THE GRZ THAT THE REPORT BY AND LARGE WAS FAIR AND OBJECTIVE. ONE POINT CONCERNED HIM. THE REPORT REFERRED TO THE DETENTION IN "RECENT YEARS" OF POLITICAL OPPONENTS OF PRESIDENT KAUNDA. HE COULD NOT IMAGINE WHAT THIS MEANT, BUT HE WAS CONCERNED THAT IT MIGHT BE TAKEN OUT OF CONTEXT AND USED TO PAINT AN UNFAIR PICTURE OF ZAMBIA AS A VIOLATOR OF HUMAN RIGHTS WHEN, IN FACT, ZAMBIA'S ABSOLUTE COMMITMENT TO THE CAUSE OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN SOUTHERN AFRICA COULD NOT BE DENIED. HE KNEW THAT THE US EMBASSY IN LUSAKA COULD NOT ALWAYS GET ACCESS TO MINISTERS OR OTHER OFFICIALS TO CLARIFY STORIES THEY HEARD, AND THAT THEY THEREFORE MIGHT REPORT HEARSAY. NGONDA SAID HE HOPED THAT IN THE FUTURE THE DEPARTMENT WOULD NOT HESITATE TO BRING SUCH QUESTIONS TO HIS ATTENTION, FOR WHATEVER EXPLANATION OR CLARIFICATION HE COULD PROVIDE. HE HOPED THAT THE US UNDERSTOOD THAT ZAMBIA GREATLY ADMIRERED PRESIDENT CARTER'S STAND ON HUMAN RIGHTS, AND WAS ITSELF TRYING TO LIVE UP TO SIMILAR PRINCIPLES.

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11. DESKOFF EXPLAINED THAT PHRASE IN QUESTION HAD BEEN INTENDED TO REFER ONLY TO BANNING OF UPP AND SUBSEQUENT DETENTION OF UPP FIGURES. HE NOTED THAT REPORT HAD ALSO OUTLINED ZAMBIAN SAFEGUARDS IN CASE OF DETAINEES, BREVITY OF MOST SUCH DETENTIONS, USE OF DETENTIONS PRIMARILY AS A PRETRIAL DEVICE, LIMITED NUMBER OF DETAINEES, AND FINALLY THAT PERSONS DETAINED IN UPP MATTER HAD REJOINED UNIP AND RESUMED ACTIVE POLITICAL LIFE.

12. MR. MOOSE EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR AMB. NGONDA'S FRANK APPRAISAL OF THE REPORT, AND OF HIS OFFER TO DISCUSS SUCH QUESTIONS WITH US WHEN THEY AROSE IN THE FUTURE. WHILE THERE WAS NO DOUBT OF THE VALIDITY OF HUMAN RIGHTS

PRINCIPLES WE ALL SHARED, ONLY TIME WOULD TELL WHETHER SUCH PROCEDURAL DEVICES AS THESE REPORTS WERE A GOOD IDEA. WE SEEMED TO BE SETTING OURSELVES UP AS JUDGES.

IN THE LONG TERM, OUR POLICY WOULD PROBABLY GET ON THE RIGHT TRACK, BUT FOR THE MOMENT IT WAS ALL SOMEWHAT EXPERIMENTAL. AS FOR ZAMBIA, HE SAID THERE COULD BE NO QUESTION ABOUT ZAMBIA'S HUMAN RIGHTS RECORD.

13. MR. MOOSE THEN READ FROM TELEGRAM HE HAD SENT TO THE FIELD AFTER THE EXERCISE WAS COMPLETED, URGING POSTS TO SEEK BETTER INFORMATION ON THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN THEIR HOST COUNTRIES, AND STRESSING OUR NEED TO LEARN MORE FROM HOST GOVERNMENTS ABOUT THEIR OWN VIEW OF THEIR PRACTICES AND CIRCUMSTANCES. HE STRESSED THAT NO ONE THINKS THAT THERE IS A HUMAN RIGHTS PROBLEM IN ZAMBIA. PRESIDENT KAUNDA'S LEADERSHIP IN SOUTHERN AFRICAN MATTERS FAR OUTSHINES ANY CRITICISM THAT MIGHT BE RAISED. NEVERTHELESS, WE FELT IT WAS CONFIDENTIAL

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BETTER TO TAKE OBJECTIVE NOTE OF ADVERSE INFORMATION THAN TO LEAVE IT OUT AND RISK CHARGES OF WHITEWASH.

14. IN CLOSING, MR. MOOSE TOLD AMB. NGONDA THAT ASST. SECRETARY DERIAN OF HA WOULD BE TRAVELING TO AFRICA. HE WANTED HER TO GO TO ZAMBIA, TO SEE WHAT IT IS LIKE TO BE A FRONT LINE STATE, WITH A MAJOR STRUGGLE FOR BASIC HUMAN RIGHTS TAKING PLACE NEXT DOOR, WITH THE INEVITABLE PRESSURES THAT THIS BRINGS TO BEAR. AMB. NGONDA REPLIED THAT HE WAS ALWAYS GLAD TO BE IN TOUCH, TO HAVE THE CHANCE TO GIVE THE US AS MUCH INFORMATION AS HE COULD, AND TO EXPLAIN THINGS WHICH MIGHT NOT BE CLEAR.

15 COMMENT: THE DISCUSSION WAS CORDIAL THROUGHOUT. IN SETTING UP THE APPOINTMENT, THE ZAMBIAN EMBASSY HAD INDICATED THAT THE HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT WAS THE MAIN TOPIC, BUT THAT THE AMBASSADOR WOULD ALSO LIKE A RUNDOWN ON MALTA. HIS DECISION TO DEVOTE VIRTUALLY THE ENTIRE MEETING TO MALTA, BRINGING UP THE HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTION ONLY AT THE END, SEEMS TO US A CLEAR INDICATION THAT HE WISHED TO DOWNPLAY THE QUESTION AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE. WHILE HE DID NOT APPEAR TO BE SPEAKING ON INSTRUCTIONS, IT SEEMS LIKELY TO US THAT NGONDA WOULD HAVE TAKEN UMBRAGE IF IT WERE THERE TO BE TAKEN. IN VIEW OF HIS REACTION AND THAT REPORTED IN LUSAKA 361, WE HOPE TO HAVE NO FURTHER PROBLEMS ON THE REPORT. VANCE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 26 sep 1999
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLITICAL SETTLEMENT, HUMAN RIGHTS, MEETINGS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 09 feb 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978STATE034233
Document Source: ADS
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: AF/E; PGSMITH
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: 11652 XGDS - 1
Errors: n/a
Expiration:
Film Number: D780060-0548
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t197802120/baaafbug.tel
Line Count: 265
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, TEXT ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 2b9cb5cf-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 27 apr 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3475212
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ZAMBIAN AMBASSADOR NGONDA'S FEB. 7 MEETING WITH ASST. SECRETARY MOOSE -- MALTA AND HUMAN RIGHTS
TAGS: PGOV, PDIP, SHUM, RH, ZA, US
To: LUSAKA
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/2b9cb5cf-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014